

Message Text

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51

ACTION EUR-25

INFO OCT-01 ADP-00 PM-07 NSC-10 SS-15 RSC-01 L-03 CIAE-00

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TAGS: EAID, PFOR, MARR, MT, UK

SUBJ: FINANCIAL TIMES ARTICLE ON BASE AGREEMENT

1. ARTICLE ENTITLED "MALTA CAN'T AFFORD TO SHUT BASES IN 1979"
WHICH APPEARED PAGE 6 AUGUST 7 EDITION LONDON FINANCIAL TIMES
APPARENTLY BASED ON FRONT PAGE LEAD ARTICLE IN SUNDAY AUGUST 5
EDITION MALTESE LANGUAGE WEEKLY IL-MUMENT (NATIONALISTS PARTY).
IL -MUMENT ARTICLE STATES: "WHEN GOM PUBLISHES SHORTLY ITS
SEVEN YEAR DEVELOPMENT PLAN, IT IS EXPECTED TO REFLECT A
MOVEMENT AWAY FROM MINTOFF'S REQUEST FOR A COMPLETE WITHDRAWAL
OF BRITISH TROOPS FROM MALTA. INFORMED SOURCES MAINTAIN
THAT WHILE MINTOFF IS PUBLICLY SAYING THAT THE BRITISH FORCES
WILL HAVE TO LEAVE MALTA BY 1979, MR. PAUL STREETEN AND
LORD BALOGH HAVE CONCLUDED THAT NO REAL CHANCES EXIST OF
MALTA BEING IN A POSITION TO MAKE GOOD THE LOSS OF 14 MILLION
POUNDS RENT BEING PAID UNDER THE BRITISH BASE AGREEMENT AND
FOR THE LOSS OF BRITISH EXPENDITURES IN MALTA AS WELL AS THE
LOSS OF OTHER ASSISTANCE TO MALTA WHICH IS TIED TO THE BASE
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RENTAL. AS A RESULT OF THESE CONSIDERATIONS, THE DEVELOPMENT

PLAN PREPARED BY MR. STREETEN AND LORD BALOGH WILL REFLECT A SOFTENING OF THE GOM'S POSITION, IT IS NOW SEEMINGLY THINKING OF REQUESTING A PHASING OUT OF THE BRITISH FORCES RATHER THAN A COMPLETE WITHDRAWAY BY 1979."

2. IL-MUMENT ARTICLE WHICH REFLECTS MORE FAVORABLE NATIONALIST PARTY ATTITUDE TOWARD BASE AGREEMENT IGNORED BY OTHER SEGMENTS OF MALTESE PRESS UNTIL APPEARANCE OF FINANCIAL TIMES' REPORT. AUGUST 8 EDITION ENGLISH LANGUAGE EVENING NEWSPAPER THE BULLETIN (CONSERVATIVE INDEPENDENT) CARRIED FRONT PAGE ARTICLE PARAPHASING FINANCIAL TIMES. SIMILARLY, AUGUST 9 EDITION ENGLISH LANGUAGE DAILY TIMES OF MALTA (CONSERVATIVE) CARRIES ITEM ENTITLED "GOVERNMENT'S ECONOMIC ADVISERS SUGGEST EXTENSION OF BRITISH BASE IN MALTA." LABOR PARTY AND GENERAL WORKERS UNION NEWSPAPERS HAVE THUS FAR IGNORED REPORT, APPARENTLY PENDING INSTRUCTIONS FROM FOLLOWING RETURN OF PM MINTOFF. GETZ

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